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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

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Letter dated 30 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a press release from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cuba to the United Nations (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 71, "Human rights questions", and agenda item 108, "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Orlando **Requeijo Gual**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 30 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Press release from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cuba to the United Nations

On Tuesday, 27 September 2005, a spokeswoman for the United States Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced in El Paso, Texas, the hasty decision of Judge William L. Abbott not to deport the terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela or Cuba, on the grounds that he was at risk of being tortured in either nation, and resorting in a contrived way to the exemptions provided for in the Convention against Torture.

On 28 September 2005, in an attempt to prolong the detention of the five Cuban anti-terrorist fighters, United States federal prosecutors in Florida announced their petition to the Court of Appeals in Atlanta for a full review of the ruling in August by a panel of three experienced judges to overturn the trial of the five Cubans in Miami on the grounds that it had not been "fair and impartial", and to order a new trial in a new venue.

Both of these news items reflect the full magnitude of the cynical and shameless conduct of the United States Government and the false and hypocritical nature of its so-called anti-terrorist crusade.

For two months, the White House concealed the presence of terrorist Luis Posada Carriles on United States soil and to this day refuses to reveal how he arrived in the country.

His arrest, which was unavoidable given the forcefulness of Cuba's denunciations, was carried out as gently and sympathetically as possible. His stay in an immigration detention centre has been marked by preferential treatment and Government spokespersons were time and again forced to resort to verbal gymnastics to avoid using the word terrorist to describe him.

In contrast, the arrest in Miami seven years ago of the five young Cuban anti-terrorist fighters was characterized by violence and the violation of their rights. They endured 17 long months in solitary confinement and a trial tainted by manipulation, bias and the vengeful hatred of the anti-Cuban mafia and its slanders. Their absurdly long sentences were the fruit of vengeance and lies.

In the case of the Cuban Five, federal prosecutors filed false charges, threatened witnesses and manipulated evidence. The conduct of the prosecutors during the El Paso trial was no less shameful: not a single argument or a single witness was presented to counter the machinations of the defence, as though there had been a prior agreement to protect the terrorist.

The same Government that has launched wars and sent its soldiers to die in the name of the fight against terrorism is the one that is now harbouring one of the most notorious terrorists of our times, the mastermind behind the horrendous sabotage of a Cuban airliner with 73 passengers aboard and the person responsible for the murders of many other citizens of Cuba and other nations.

Washington is defending one of its foot soldiers in its criminal war against our people, in its support for Latin American dictatorships in earlier decades, in the sinister operations of the dirty war in Central America and in the attempts on the lives of political figures and heads of State opposed to imperialism's hegemonic interests.

How cynical then to resort to the argument of torture in the case of Posada Carriles, when it is he who stands accused in Venezuela of having savagely tortured many citizens of that country during his years as an officer in DISIP.

It is all the more cynical as the country being accused internationally of practising torture is neither Venezuela nor Cuba, but precisely the United States, which has made that degrading treatment a common practice in Afghanistan, Iraq and the illegally occupied naval base at Guantanamo.

Cuba, moreover, has not sought the extradition of the terrorist, in spite of the fact that it has every right to do so. It is Venezuela that has requested the extradition of a criminal who still owes a debt to that country's justice system and which has offered all the necessary guarantees to put Posada Carriles on trial. The Government of the United States has maintained a shameful silence on this request in a clear demonstration of its complicity with the terrorist.

It remains to be seen which third-party country will offer to take in such a criminal and relieve Washington of this particular hot potato, as is foreshadowed by Judge Abbott's decision.

Cuba will not stop fighting until Posada Carriles, Orlando Bosch and other terrorists of their ilk are convicted of their crimes.

Cuba will continue to support the legitimate request for extradition presented by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Cuba will continue to denounce the cruel detention of our five heroes of the anti-terrorist struggle in remote prisons in the United States. Our people will never give up their struggle for them to return to their homeland with dignity and in freedom.